

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
OFFICE OF MARINE SAFETY

In the Matter of:

"FIRE ON BOARD M/V COLUMBIA"

Docket No.:
DCA00MM030

Recorded Interview SAM MORROW.

Drydock

Wheel-House Alaska Shipyard and

Juneau Ketchikan, Alaska

June 15, 2000

BEFORE:

TOM ROTH PEROTH-ROFFY
Interviewer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WITNESS:

PAGE

Sam Morrow

3

P R O C E E D I N G S

(9:40 a.m.)

1
2
3 MR. ROTHROPEROTH-ROFFY: Good morning. It's
4 about 9:40 on June 15th. My witness is Sam Morrow,
5 Electrician.

6 MR. ROTHROPEROTH-ROFFY: Could you just for
7 the record go ahead and state your name and your
8 address?

9 MR. MORROW: My name is Sam Morrow. Post
10 Office Box 1649, Ward Cove Alaska 99928. I am an
11 Electrician, Alaska Shipping Dry Dock.

12 MR. ROTHROPEROTH-ROFFY: What was the name of
13 that city? Wordcove?

14 MR. MORROW: Ward Cove. W-a-r-d Cove.

15 MR. ROTHROPEROTH-ROFFY: Okay, Sam, I'm with
16 the National Transportation Safety Board. And we're
17 investigating the accident that occurred on the Motor
18 Vessel Columbia. There was a switchboard problem.

19 And we're looking into trying to determine
20 what happened. So our investigation is strictly aimed
21 at safety, transportation safety, and trying to find
22 out what happened so that we could maybe make a
23 recommendation to the Coast Guard, to the vessel
24 operators, to the manufacturers that might, you know,
25 help top prevent a similar accident again.

1 So, again, it's strictly safety. Nothing
2 legal. We're not trying to establish culpability or
3 liability or to establish blame. It's strictly a, you
4 know, what happened and what can we do to prevent it
5 from happening again.

6 So I'd just like to ask you a few questions
7 about the work that you did on the Columbia while it
8 was here in the area of electrical.

9 MR. MORROW: Mind if I stand? ~~...y~~ on my
10 back?.. It's more --

11 MR. ROTHROPEROTH-ROFFY: Oh, sure. Yeah. No
12 problem.

13 E X A M I N A T I O N

14 BY MR. ROTHROPEROTH-ROFFY:

15 Q Just tell me what electrical work you did on
16 the Columbia.

17 A On the Columbia, I did forward observation
18 lounge, on the boat deck I did all the lighting, every
19 bit of it up there. And the light in the foyer right
20 outside the lounge.

21 Just consisted of taking down the old
22 fixtures, running maybe a few jumpers from light to
23 light. I used pretty much existing cables.

24 I also helped pull the 200 from the... main
25 ventilation panel. We had to make the panel bigger to

1 install two cable for a couple of davits. We needed to
2 have a bigger panel, so we put a panel in up on the
3 cabin deck, which ran from the ~~NCCs~~-MCCs down in EOS
4 where the problem was.

5 And all we did there was run a 200 from that
6 panel all the way down to the EOS. I did not terminate
7 anything in the EOS. My end of that job was
8 terminating the panel upstairs, putting davits, the
9 ventilation in the feeder itself.

10 So, as far as anything that happened down
11 there, you know, I saw the inside of that panel once.
12 I didn't even get a good look at it downstairs. I
13 didn't do anything down there. I put a breaker in.

14 We had hooked up one end. We put in a new
15 panel, we weren't ready yet. The 200 wasn't terminated
16 in the MCC. So we had to put a 200-amp breaker in
17 instead of a 400 down there for a small period of time,
18 until we terminated both ends of the cable.

19 That's all I did.

20 Q I'm not sure I understand. There was
21 initially a 200-amp breaker there.

22 A Yeah, I believe there was. I'm not certain
23 but I think there was. And because we were adding
24 another cable on to it, we had to make a capacity for a
25 400-amp.

1 Q Right.

2 A Which is why we stuck the 400-amp breaker in
3 there.

4 Q Did you say you took out the existing 200 amp
5 and put in a different -- put 200-amps?

6 A No. No. No. No. When we took the 200 out,
7 we replaced it with the four. So it was would hold
8 all..both lines. coming off the breaker.

9 Q Were you involved in that changeout of that
10 breaker?

11 A Not initially. Not initially, no. But I did
12 go down and secure it, make sure it was secured and all
13 that down there. I'm like the head guy, I guess, the
14 head of electricians. So I like to go behind and make
15 sure that things are good because, ultimately, if not,
16 it falls pretty much on my shoulders...

17 So I just like to double-check everything.
18 Even with changing lightbulbs, I like to go around and
19 check.

20 Q So you say you secured it. What did you do
21 to secure it?

22 A Just test to make sure, you know, the breaker
23 was set properly. Make sure the bolt holds the breaker
24 on properly. You know, seated properly and everything
25 was good. Everything looked good.

1 Q Okay, that was on the new 400-amp breaker you
2 did that? Checked it?

3 A Yeah. And I'll tell you, I looked behind
4 there. Once or twice, I looked behind there and there
5 was nothing. Our cable came through the Nelson and it
6 was perfect. Our cable was perfect.

7 You know, I'm not the one to say whose fault
8 it was but I can say, you know, in my nine years of
9 doing this, there was absolutely nothing wrong with
10 what we did. Nothing.

11 Q Again, you were involved in this particular
12 job. Did you assist in the direct running the cable?

13 A I just assisted in running the cable.

14 Q In running the cable?

15 A Yes.

16 Q You assisted who? Who worked with you?

17 A Me, my friend, Phil; Calvin. And I believe
18 Charles even helped us. I believe he was still here at
19 that time.

20 And, Gary.

21 Q Gary?

22 A Gary Turner.

23 Q Gary Turner?

24 A Yeah.

25 Q So what's Phil's last name?

1 A Parker.

2 Q Phil Parker.

3 A Calvin Preston. And Gary turner.

4 Q So the four of you basically pulled that

5 cable?

6 A Basically, the four of us.

7 Q And Charles also assisted you.

8 A Charles also assisted us, yes.

9 Q Who actually did the work in the main

10 switchboard pulling the old 200 amp breaker out?

11 A The actual termination on that end I believe

12 was done by Gary. He was the only one that could fit.

13 He was pretty skinny.

14 And I don't know who else was down there

15 honestly because I was at the other end doing my job,

16 terminating the other panel upstairs.

17 So I really don't know who had their hands in

18 there or who was doing what down there.

19 Q So you were terminating the other end of the

20 cable.

21 A Yes.

22 Q In the new panel, the P-2.

23 A Correct.

24 Q And did you also work on the change out of

25 that old panel and replacing it with the new panel?

1 A No. No, I did not. I just terminated it.

2 Q So did you terminate it, connect it to the
3 new distribution panel at the same time they were
4 working on the other end?

5 A No, I did not terminate that end of the cable
6 because they were not ready at the other end. So I
7 don't have any feedback on what was happening on that.
8 So, no. That was terminated by someone else later,
9 after the other end was terminated.

10 So, basically, I just terminated the existing
11 cable that was there, that ran the ventilation and
12 stuff. That's what I terminated.

13 Q And it was dead at that time that you
14 terminated it, right? Or was it?

15 A Yes, we killed power to it. Yeah,
16 definitely. You can't terminate it without it being
17 hotdead.

18 And then we turned it onff and ran it for
19 about a week, until we were ready to terminate the
20 other cables.

21 Q When you turned it on after a week, had the
22 other cable already been running?

23 A The other cable was already ran, yeah. It
24 just wasn't ready to terminated the MTC because we have
25 to go dead ship to do that. Because we had to go dead

1 ship, you know, the chances of --

2 Q So, neither end was terminated, it was just
3 the cable --

4 A At that time, right.

5 Q At a later time, you went dead ship and
6 terminated all...

7 A I'm gathering -- that's how I was told it was
8 going to be done. I wasn't involved in it. But, that,
9 to me, that's the only way you can do it, is go dead
10 ship. You go dead.

11 Q Okay, so you weren't actually involved in
12 that part?

13 A Not terminating the new cable, no.

14 Q Do you know who did that?

15 A Like I said, I think Gary terminated the end
16 at the MCC because he was the one that could fit in
17 there. I think Phil was involved.

18 You know, I can't even say because I wasn't
19 around for that. You know, I was taking care of the
20 lounge upstairs while that was going on. So I can't
21 really tell you.

22 I didn't see anybody face to face down there.

23 So, in all honesty, I couldn't tell you exactly who
24 was there.

25 Q You mentioned you have been with ASD what?

1 Six years?

2 A No. I've only been with ASD since August of
3 last year. I just moved up here a couple of years ago.

4 I was born and raised here but I just moved back a
5 couple of years ago.

6 But I've been doing electrical work since
7 '92.

8 Q Okay, and your position here with ASD is?

9 A Electric.

10 Q Are you an lead man, ...

11 A Well, no, I don't have the title. But, when
12 it comes down to it, yeah, I pretty much have to make
13 sure everything goes right.

14 Q And is that because of your --

15 A My experience.

16 Q -- of your experience. You've had more
17 experience than some of the other guys in the Marine
18 work-- is that correct?

19 A In any work, yeah, basically. Or even work I
20 have here in the Marine -- all the systems are the
21 same, ?forty, three-phase systems, ... they're just
22 grounding and stuff like that, there's a lot of
23 difference, but it's all electrical.

24 MR. ROTHROPEROTH-ROFFY: Right. I guess
25 that's all I have for you. And I appreciate you coming

1 down and talking with me.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. MORROW: Thank you.

4 (Interview concluded.)